

**Postneonatal Death** - A postneonatal death is the death of a liveborn child of 28 days to one year of age. Only matched postneonatal deaths are displayed in this report. A matched postneonatal death is one which is matched with a birth certificate.

Representing deaths among calendar-year birth cohorts, death rates are calculated by the formulas below. Each of these rates is strictly a fraction multiplied by 1,000.

$$\text{Five-year fetal death rate} = \frac{\text{Five-year number of fetal deaths}}{\text{Five-year number of live births plus the five-year number of fetal deaths}} \times 1,000$$

$$\text{Five-year neonatal death rate} = \frac{\text{Five-year number of neonatal deaths}}{\text{Five-year number of live births}} \times 1,000$$

$$\text{Four-year postneonatal death rate} = \frac{\text{Four-year number of postneonatal deaths}}{\text{Four-year number of live births minus the four-year number of neonatal deaths}} \times 1,000$$

These rates are calculated for each of the following 16 groups of maternal characteristics (1):

Age (at last birthday)

Under 18\*

18-34 years

35+ years\*

Education (grades completed)

Under 9 years\*

9-11 years\*

12+ years

Out of Wedlock

Yes\*

No

Parity

1

2-3

4+\*

Previous Fetal Death (PFD)

Yes\*

No

Previous Liveborn Now Dead (PLBND)

Yes\*

No

One or More Risk Factors

Yes\*

No

\*Maternal risk group; see Reference 1.

## Live Births

Trends in the 5-year numbers of live births are presented in Table A. The decline observed in the early seventies leveled off by 1975-79 (9% to 2% decrease) and now has been reversed (2% increase). The number of nonwhite births increased during the last two 5-year periods while the number of white births increased during the most recent period. During 1984, the number of white and nonwhite births increased 3.4 and 0.7 percent respectively; the number of white births (59,392) was the highest since 1972.

Table A

Trends in the Number of Live Births by Race  
North Carolina 1969-73 through 1979-83

		1969-73	1972-76	1975-79	1979-83
White	Number	323,970	288,555	279,586	286,117
	% Change*		-11	-3	+2
Nonwhite	Number	138,517	131,748	132,599	135,660
	% Change*		-5	+1	+2
Total	Number	462,487	420,303	412,185	421,777
	% Change*		-9	-2	+2

\*Percentage change in the number of live births from the previous time period.

## Deliveries Within Risk Groups

'Deliveries' is defined as the combination of live births and the relatively few fetal deaths.

During 1979-83, a larger percentage of nonwhite than white infants continued to be premature (birthweight under 2500 grams) and, as shown in Table B, larger percentages of nonwhite than white deliveries again occurred to women who (a) were under 18 years of age, (b) were of low educational attainment, (c) were unmarried, (d) were of high parity, and (e) had experienced a previous liveborn now dead (PLBND).

In terms of changes in the percentages of deliveries reported, most of the eight maternal risk factors for fetal and infant death showed a decline in the 1979-83 period; this is seen for both whites and nonwhites. The two risk factors 'previous fetal death' and 'out of wedlock' involved increasing percentages for both races while the risk factor 'over age 34' involved an increase for whites only. As a result, the percentage of deliveries to women over 34 years of age is now higher among whites than among nonwhites.

The increasing percentage of deliveries to unmarried women may be explained by an increasing delivery rate among those women or by an increasing number of unmarried women. In North Carolina, it appears that unmarried white women 20 and older and unmarried nonwhite women 25 and older have recently experienced rising fertility (unpublished data).